

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Carson City District Office

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION  
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

---

**Project Creator:** Edward Klimasauskas

**Field Office:** Stillwater

**Lead Office:**

**Case File/Project Number:** NVN-

**Applicable Categorical Exclusion**

516 DM 11.9: B. (5) Approval of Notices of Intent to conduct geophysical exploration of oil, gas, or geothermal, pursuant to 43 CFR 3150 or 3250, when no temporary or new road construction is proposed.

**NEPA Number:** DOI-BLM-NV-2011-C010-0528-CX

**Project Name:** AltaRock Inc. Passive Seismic Survey – Revision/Part B

**Project Description:** This is a revision to AltaRock Inc.'s previously approved seismic survey reflecting revised locations for the second part of their study. The new proposal also differs in the manner of installation. Original site locations and installation were analyzed under DOI-BLM-NV-C010-2011-0008-CX.

The new proposal is to conduct a passive seismic survey which will consist of 21 broadband seismometers installed over a broad area centered on Dixie Valley. Only 18 of these sites are located within the Stillwater Field Office, CCDO. Of these 18, two (B09\_A07 and B19N\_A05) were previously analyzed and installed under DOI-BLM-NV-C010-2011-0527-CX and would remain in place for the duration of the second part of this study. The remaining 3 sites are located within the Winnemucca Field Office. The passive seismic survey is expected to last three months. Sites have been moved from the original proposed locations to be closer or adjacent to existing roads in order to mitigate overland travel.

Ground disturbance would be limited to holes for placement of the seismometers. For each site a hole no more than 36 inches in diameter and 42 inches deep will be dug by hand or small Bobcat excavator with a 30-inch diameter auger.

A container used to house the seismometer will be placed in the hole and cemented in place. The container will be covered with a removable tile and the entire unit backfilled to the surface. A cable will extend from the seismometer to the surface where it will be connected to a weatherproof box containing electronics, data logger, and battery. Solar panels used to recharge the battery would be mounted on top of the weatherproof box. The entire assembly would be mounted on two parallel horizontal pipes measuring approximately 7 feet long and 3 inches in diameter (see attached photos).

Access would be through existing roads or short stretches of overland travel. Following removal of the seismometers the remaining vaults would be buried in place beneath at least 12 inches of soil.

**Applicant Name:** AltaRock Inc.

**Project Location:** Dixie Valley and surrounding area

**BLM Acres for the Project Area:** 1

**Land Use Plan Conformance:** MIN-1: Encourage development of energy and mineral resources in a timely manner to meet national, regional and local needs consistent with the objectives for other public land uses.

**Name of Plan:** Carson City Field Office Consolidated Resource Management Plan (2001)



Augering hole and installation of cement platform. Seismometers rest on the cement platform for better connectivity to the ground.

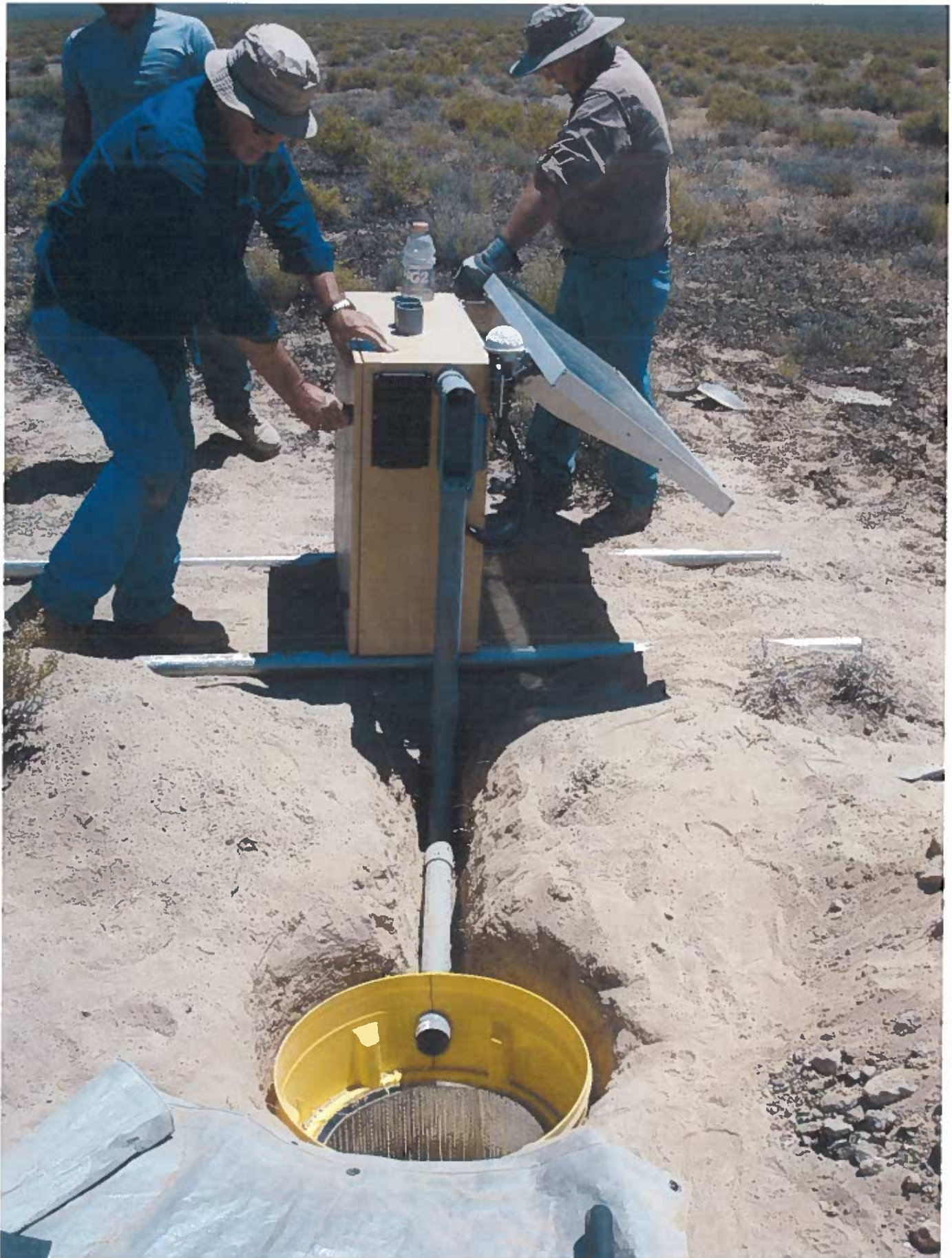


Vault and final placement of seismometer within the vault.

**Screening of Extraordinary Circumstances:** The following extraordinary circumstances apply to individual actions within categorical exclusions (43 CFR 46.215). The BLM has considered the following criteria: (Specialist review: initial in appropriate box)

<i>If any question is answered 'yes' an EA or EIS must be prepared.</i>	YES	NO
1. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on public health or safety? (Range-Jill Devaurs)		gd
2. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); floodplains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds (EO 13186); and other ecologically significant or critical areas? (Archeology, Recreation, Wilderness, Wildlife, Range by allotment, Water Quality)		JKL D A
3. Would the Proposed Action have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA 102(2)(E)]? (PEC)		JKL
4. Would the Proposed Action have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks? (PEC)		JKL
5. Would the Proposed Action establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects? (PEC)		JKL
6. Would the Proposed Action have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? (PEC)		JKL
7. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the NRHP as determined by the bureau or office? (Archeology)		JKL
8. Would the Proposed Action have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the list of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species? (Wildlife)		A
9. Would the Proposed Action violate federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment? (PEC and Archeology)		JKL JKL
10. Would the Proposed Action have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EA 12898)? ((PEC)		JKL
11. Would the Proposed Action limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007)? (Archeology)		JKL
12. Would the Proposed Action contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and EO 13112)? (Range-Jill Devaurs)		gd





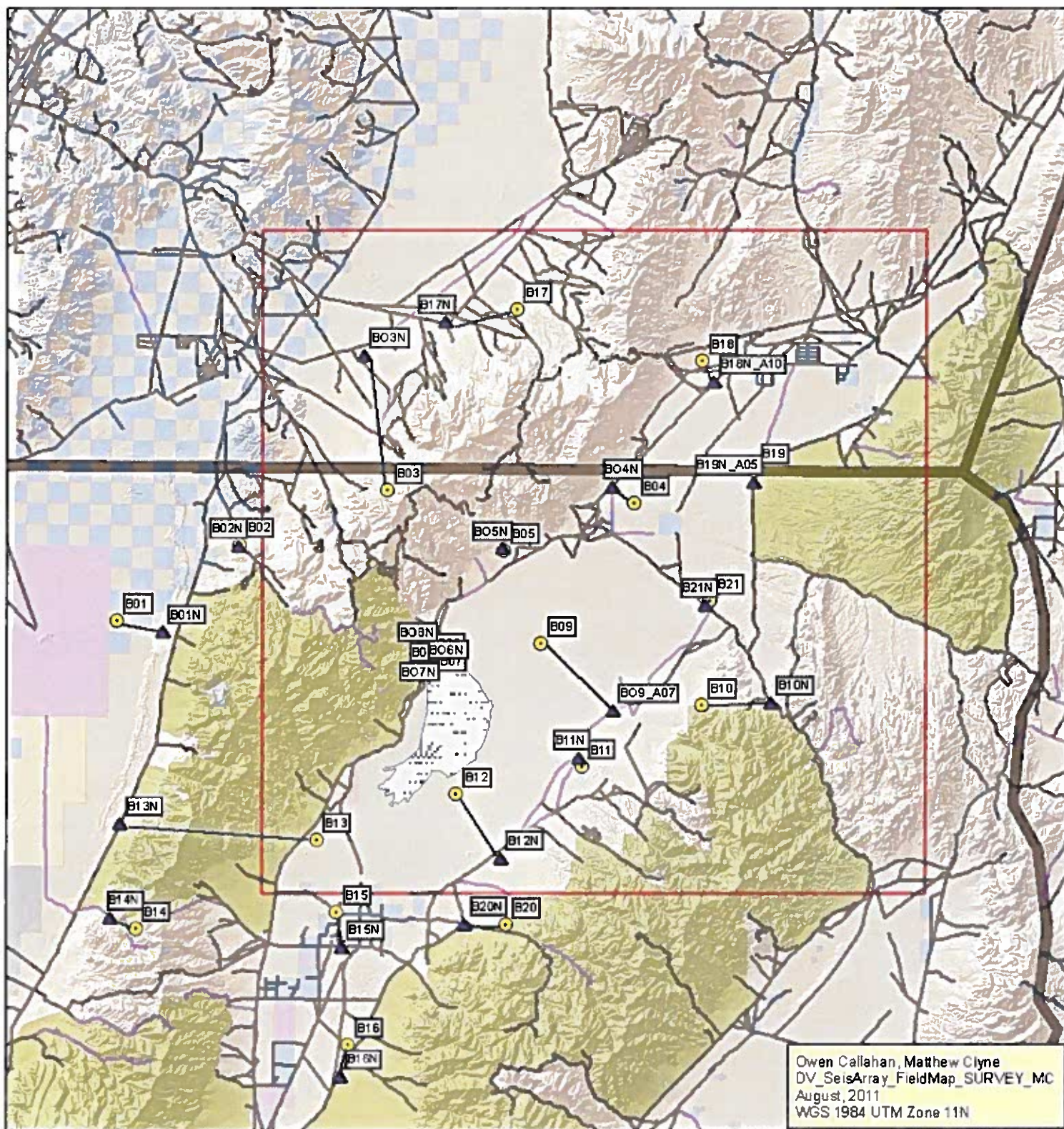
View of near final installation of seismic station.

<b>Station ID No.</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>
B01N	39.885	-118.240
B02N	39.944	-118.174
B03N	40.075	-118.065
B04N	39.987	-117.845
B05N	39.944	-117.941
B06N	39.863	-118.010
B07N	39.871	-118.016
B08N	39.875	-118.004
B09_A07	39.835	-117.842
B10N	39.841	-117.703
B11N	39.803	-117.872
B12N	39.734	-117.939
B13N	39.754	-118.275
B14N	39.690	-118.283
B15N	39.672	-118.078
B16N	39.584	-118.078
B17N	40.098	-117.994
B18N_A10	40.059	-117.756
B19N_A05	39.991	-117.720
B20N	39.689	-117.970
B21N	39.907	-117.762

sites on Winnemucca

previous sites to remain operational





## Legend

- |                                     |               |                        |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| ▲ SeismicB_Field_Loc                | ..... Footway | Humboldt Salt Marsh    |
| ○ Seismic B Array Original Location | — Road        | Wilderness Study Areas |
|                                     | — Track       | BLM                    |
|                                     |               | BR                     |
|                                     |               | DOD                    |
|                                     |               | Private                |
|                                     |               | County Boundary        |

**Figure 1**

## SPECIALISTS' REVIEW:

During ID Team review of the above Proposed Action and extraordinary circumstances, the following specialists reviewed this CX:

Planning Environmental Coordinator, Steve Kramer:

Public Health and Safety/Grazing/Noxious Weeds, Jill Devaurs: *JD, BA*

Recreation/Wilderness/VRM/LWC, Dan Westermeyer: *DW 7/12/11*

Wildlife/T&E (BLM Sensitive Species), John Wilson: *JW 9-12-11*

Archeology, Jason Wright: *JKW*

Water Quality, Gabe Venegas: *GV 9/12/11*

Soils, Jill Devaurs/Linda Appel/Chelsy Simerson: *LA*

**CONCLUSION:** Based upon the review of this Proposed Action, I have determined that the above-described project is a categorical exclusion, in conformance with the LUP, and does not require an EA or EIS. A categorical exclusion is not subject to protest or appeal.

Approved by:

*Teresa J. Knutson*

Teresa J. Knutson

Field Manager

Stillwater Field Office

*7/15/11*

(date)